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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Sixth Committee (A/45/733)]

45/40. United Nations Decade of International Law

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 44/23 of 17 November 1989 by which it declared the period 1990-1999 the United Nations Decade of International Law,

Recalling also that the main purposes of the Decade, according to resolution 44/23, should be, inter alia:

(a) To promote acceptance of and respect for the principles of international law;

(b) To promote means and methods for the peaceful settlement of disputes between States, including resort to and full respect for the International Court of Justice;

(c) To encourage the progressive development of international law and its codification;

(d) To encourage the teaching, study, dissemination and wider appreciation of international law;

Recalling further that it decided to consider the question of the programme for the Decade and of appropriate action to be taken during the Decade at its forty-fifth session,

Expressing its appreciation for the Secretary-General's report on the United Nations Decade of International Law, 1/ submitted pursuant to resolution 44/23,

Noting that the Sixth Committee established the Working Group on the United Nations Decade of International Law with a view to preparing generally acceptable recommendations for the Decade,

Having considered the report of the Sixth Committee submitted to that end, 2/

1. Expresses its appreciation to the Sixth Committee for the elaboration, within the framework of its Working Group, of the programme for the activities to be commenced during the first term (1990-1992) of the United Nations Decade of International Law, and requests the Working Group to continue its work at the forty-sixth session in accordance with its mandate and methods of work;

2. Adopts the programme for the activities to be commenced during the first term (1990-1992) of the Decade as an integral part of the present resolution, to which it is annexed;

3. Expresses its appreciation to States and international organizations for taking the initiative to sponsor conferences on various subjects of international law;

4. Invites all international organizations and institutions referred to in the programme to undertake the relevant activities outlined therein and, as appropriate, to submit to the Secretary-General interim or final reports for transmission to the General Assembly at the forty-sixth session or, at the latest, the forty-seventh session;

5. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a progress report to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session on the implementation of the programme;

6. Appeals to States, international organizations and non-governmental organizations working in this field and to the private sector to make financial contributions or contributions in kind for the purpose of facilitating the implementation of the programme;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to bring the present resolution to the attention of States and appropriate international bodies, as well as non-governmental organizations working in the field;

8. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-sixth session the item entitled "United Nations Decade of International Law".

48th plenary meeting
28 November 1990

1/ A/45/430 and Corr.1 and Add.1-3.

2/ See A/C.6/45/L.5.

ANNEX

Programme for the activities to be commenced during the first term (1990-1992) of the United Nations Decade of International Law

I. PROMOTION OF THE ACCEPTANCE OF AND RESPECT FOR THE PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

1. The General Assembly, bearing in mind that maintenance of international peace and security is the underlying condition for the success of the implementation of the programme of the United Nations Decade of International Law, calls upon States to act in accordance with international law, and particularly the Charter of the United Nations.

2. States are invited to consider, if they have not yet done so, becoming parties to existing multilateral treaties, in particular those relevant to the progressive development of international law and its codification. International organizations under whose auspices such treaties are concluded are invited to indicate whether they publish periodic reports on the status of ratifications of and accessions to multilateral treaties and, if they do not, to indicate whether in their view such a process would be useful. Consideration should be given to the question of treaties which have not achieved wider participation or entered into force after a considerable lapse of time and the circumstances causing the situation.

3. States and international organizations are encouraged to provide assistance and technical advice to States, in particular to developing countries, to facilitate their participation in the process of multilateral treaty-making, including their adherence to and implementation of such multilateral treaties.

4. States are encouraged to report to the Secretary-General on ways and means, as provided for by the multilateral treaties to which they are parties, regarding the implementation of such treaties. The Secretary-General is requested to prepare a report on the basis of this information and to submit it to the General Assembly.

II. PROMOTION OF MEANS AND METHODS FOR THE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES BETWEEN STATES, INCLUDING RESORT TO AND FULL RESPECT FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

1. The United Nations system of organizations and regional organizations, including the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee, as well as the International Law Association, the Institute of International Law, the Hispano-Luso-American Institute of International Law and other international institutions working in the field of international law, and national societies of international law, are invited to study the means and methods for the peaceful settlement of disputes between States, including resort to and full respect for the International Court of Justice, and to present suggestions for the promotion thereof to the Sixth Committee.

2. States are invited to make proposals to the Sixth Committee in respect of the promotion of means and methods for the peaceful settlement of disputes between States, including resort to and full respect for the International Court of Justice.

3. The Sixth Committee is requested to consider, taking into account the above-mentioned suggestions and proposals, and, where appropriate, on the basis of a report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, or of the Working Group on the United Nations Decade of International Law, the following questions:

(a) Strengthening the use of means and methods for the peaceful settlement of disputes, with particular attention to the role to be played by the United Nations, as well as methods for early identification and prevention of disputes and their containment;

(b) Procedures for the peaceful settlement of disputes arising in specific areas of international law;

(c) Ways and means of encouraging greater recognition of the role of the International Court of Justice and its wider use in the peaceful settlement of disputes;

(d) Enhancement of co-operation of regional organizations with the United Nations system of organizations in respect of the peaceful settlement of disputes.

III. ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND ITS CODIFICATION

1. International organizations, including the United Nations system of organizations and regional organizations, are invited to submit to the Secretary-General of the United Nations summary information regarding the programmes and results of their work relevant to the progressive development of international law and its codification, including their suggestions for future work in their specialized field, with an indication of the appropriate forum to undertake such work. Similarly, the Secretary-General is requested to prepare a report on the relevant activities of the United Nations, including those of the International Law Commission. Such information should be presented in a report by the Secretary-General to the Sixth Committee.

2. On the basis of the information mentioned in paragraph 1 of the present section, States are invited to submit suggestions for consideration by the Sixth Committee and, as appropriate, recommendation. In particular, efforts should be made to identify areas of international law which might be ripe for progressive development or codification.

3. The Sixth Committee is requested to study, taking into account General Assembly resolution 684 (VII) of 6 November 1952, its co-ordinating role with respect to, inter alia, the drafting of provisions of a legal nature and the consistent use of legal terminology in international instruments adopted by the General Assembly.

4. The Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization is requested to continue studying possible measures to strengthen the United Nations system for the maintenance of international peace and security. States, particularly those that proposed the inclusion of this question in the programme for the Decade, are invited to present draft texts to the Secretary-General or the Special Committee for consideration.

IV. ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE TEACHING, STUDY, DISSEMINATION AND WIDER APPRECIATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

1. The Advisory Committee on the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law is requested, in the context of the Decade, to formulate relevant guidelines for the Programme's activities and to report to the Sixth Committee on the activities carried out under the Programme in accordance with such guidelines. Special emphasis should be given to supporting academic and professional institutions already carrying out research and education in international law, as well as to encouraging the establishment of such institutions where they might not exist, particularly in the developing countries. States are encouraged to contribute to the strengthening of the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law.

2. States should encourage their educational institutions to introduce courses in international law for students studying law, political science, social sciences and other relevant disciplines; they should study the possibility of introducing topics of international law in the curricula of schools at the primary and secondary levels. Co-operation between institutions at the university level amongst developing countries, on the one hand, and their co-operation with those of developed countries on the other, should be encouraged.

3. States should consider convening conferences of experts at the national and regional levels in order to study the question of preparing model curricula and materials for courses in international law, training of teachers in international law, preparation of textbooks on international law and the use of modern technology to facilitate the teaching of and research in international law.

4. The United Nations system of organizations, regional organizations and States should consider organizing seminars, symposia, training courses, lectures and meetings and undertaking studies on various aspects of international law. States and regional organizations have already expressed their readiness to undertake such activities on the following subjects: developing countries and international law (China); developing countries and international legislation on the environment (China); law of the sea (Yugoslavia); joint ventures in deep sea-bed mining (Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee); and promotion of the ratification of the United Nations conventions on refugees (Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee).

5. States are encouraged to organize special training in international law for legal professionals, including judges, and personnel of ministries of foreign

affairs and other relevant ministries. The United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Hague Academy of International Law and regional organizations are invited to co-operate in this respect with States.

6. Co-operation among developing countries, as well as between developed and developing countries, in particular among those persons who are involved in the practice of international law, for exchanging experience and for mutual assistance in the field of international law, including assistance in providing textbooks and manuals of international law, is encouraged.

7. In order to make better known the practice of international law, States, regional and other international organizations should endeavour to publish, if they have not done so, summaries, repertories or yearbooks of their practice.

8. It would be conducive to the teaching and dissemination of international law if all judgments and advisory opinions of the International Court of Justice were available in all official languages of the United Nations. As envisaged in General Assembly resolution 44/28 of 4 December 1989 and bearing in mind the wishes expressed by States, the Sixth Committee will consider, at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General's report containing a study of alternative means of making the publications of the International Court of Justice available in all the other official languages in addition to French and English, within the existing overall level of appropriations and in a way which meets the concerns expressed by the Court. Such a study should also consider the possibility, within the existing overall level of appropriations, of compiling and publishing thematic and analytical summaries of the judgments and advisory opinions of the International Court of Justice.

9. Other international courts and tribunals, including the European Court of Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, are invited to disseminate more widely their judgements and advisory opinions, and to consider preparing thematic or analytical summaries thereof.

10. International organizations are requested to publish treaties concluded under their auspices, if they have not yet done so. Timely publication of the United Nations Treaty Series is encouraged and efforts directed towards adopting an electronic form of publication should be continued. Timely publication of the United Nations Juridical Yearbook is also encouraged.

V. PROCEDURES AND ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS

1. The Sixth Committee, working primarily through its Working Group and with the assistance of the Secretariat, will be the co-ordinating body of the programme for the United Nations Decade of International Law. The question of the use of an intra-sessional, inter-sessional or existing body to carry out specific activities of the programme may be considered by the General Assembly.

2. The Sixth Committee is requested to continue to prepare the programme of activities for the Decade.

3. All organizations and institutions referred to and invited to submit reports to the Secretary-General under sections I to IV above are requested to submit interim or final reports preferably at the forty-sixth session but not later than the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

4. States are encouraged to establish, as necessary, national, subregional and regional committees which may assist in the implementation of the programme for the Decade. Non-governmental organizations are encouraged to promote the purposes of the Decade within the fields of their activities, as appropriate.

5. It is recognized that, within the existing overall level of appropriations, adequate financing for the implementation of the programme for the Decade is necessary and should be provided. Voluntary contributions from Governments, international organizations and other sources, including the private sector, would be useful and are strongly encouraged. To this end, the establishment of a trust fund to be administered by the Secretary-General might be considered by the General Assembly.